

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN

TO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY KUWAIT IMMEDIATE

SECSTATE WASHDC 6422

C O N F I D E N T I A L AMMAN 9723

DAMASCUS FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY ATHERTON

KUWAIT FOR AMBASSADOR PICKERING

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, JO

SUBJECT: KING HUSSEIN'S INTERVIEW WITH NEWSWEEK'S DE BORCHGRAVE

REF: STATE 295907

1. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED. INTERVIEW APPEARED IN 15 DECEMBER
PARIS HERALD TRIBUNE (JUST RECEIVED HERE) IN MUCH LONGER AND DETAILED
VERSION THAN IN NEWSWEEK (REFTEL). ACCORDING TO TRIBUNE VERSION,
KING HUSSEIN MADE FOLLOWING POINTS (IN ADDITION TO THOSE
REPORTED IN NEWSWEEK VIZ. THAT ISRAEL MUST RECOGNIZE PLO BEFORE
PLO COMPELLED TO RECOGNIZE ISRAEL, ATTACK BY ISRAEL ON
SYRIA WILL BE CONSIDERED ATTACK ON JORDAN, AND THERE ARE
NO JORDAN-PLO DIFFERENCES " AS FAR AS JORDAN CONCERNED":

A. RE GENEVA CONFERENCE, PLO SHOULD ATTEND "FROM THE
VERY BEGINNING -- BUT WITHOUT US (JORDAN)" BECAUSE "WE
ARE NO LONGER DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN THE NEGOTIATIONS FOR
THE RECOVERY OF THE WEST BANK SINCE THE PLO HAS BEEN
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GIVEN THE MANDATE TO NEGOTIATE THE RECOVERY OF OCCUPIED

PALESTIANE";

B. THE JANUARY SECURITY COUNCIL DEBATE SHOULD LEAD TO "A SPECIFIC TIMETABLE TO IMPLEMENT THE ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL ON THE GROUND";

C. "THE MIDDLE EAST CRISIS . . . IS BASICALLY A PALESTINIAN PROBLEM" AND "UNLESS THEY REGAIN THEIR NATIONAL RIGHTS, THERE WILL BE NO PEACE." "REASONABLE PALESTINIAN RIGHTS" ARE "THE RIGHT TO RETURN TO THEIR HOMELAND, EXERCISE THEIR RIGHT OF SELF-DETERMINATION AND CREATE THEIR OWN NATIONAL INDEPENDENT STATE.";

D. JORDANIAN "GOOD OFFICES" ARE "IRRELEVANT" TO SETTLEMENT WITH ISRAEL OF PALESTINIAN PROBLEM;

E. RE SECURITY THREAT TO ISRAEL OF A WEST BANK PALESTINIAN STATE: " IF ISRAEL WITHDRAWS AND A PALESTINIAN STATE IS CREATED IN LIBERATED PALESTINIAN TERRITORY, WE WILL BE TALKING ABOUT REAL PEACE IN THE AREA WITH ALL THE BUILT-IN GUARANTEES THAT THIS WOULD ENTAIL." END UNCLASSIFIED

2. BEGIN CONFIDENTIAL. COMMENT: FULL INTERVIEW, WHICH BILLED IN PARIS HERALD TRIBUNE AS REPLY TO ONE DE BORCHGRAVE HAD WITH RABIN LAST WEEK, RECEIVED PROMINENT MEDIA COVERAGE IN AMMAN TODAY. WHILE MUCH OF WHAT KING HUSSEIN SAID IS FAMILIAR ABOUT PALESTINIAN RIGHTS AND PLO RESPONSIBILITY FOR PALESTINIAN QUESTIONS AFTER RABAT, HE APPEARED IN THIS INTERVIEW MORE CATEGORICAL IN DISCLAIMING ROLE FOR JORDAN IN NEGOTIATIONS ABOUT FUTURE OF WEST BANK. ALTHOUGH HE DID NOT GIVE OUTRIGHT "NO" ANSWER TO DE BORDHGRAVE'S "WOULD JORDAN BE WILLING TO ATTEND GENEVA CONFERENCE?", HIS ANSWER BY IMPLICATION POURED COLD WATER ON THE NOTION REPORTEDLY RESURRECTED IN SOME CIRCLES OF A JOINT JORDAN-PLO DELEGATION ON WEST BANK MATTERS, OR AT LEAST HUSSEIN PUT JORDAN ON RECORD AS NOT PUSHING THAT FORMULA. AS FOR JORDAN'S MILITARY RESPONSIBILITIES TO SYRIA, EMBASSY NOTE'S HUSSEIN'S RESPONSE LIMITED TO CASE OF ISRAELI AGGRESSION. ON QUESTION OF GUARANTEED SECURITY FOR ISRAEL ONCE PALESTINIAN STATE CREATED, KING HUSSEIN APPEARS TO HAVE GONE FURTHER THAN OTHER ARAB GOVERNMENT LEADERS SO FAR AND CERTAINLY THAT SOME FACTIONS OF PLO. SUDDARTH
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